

## Modeling Repurchase Intention: An Empirical Study on the Mediating Role of Brand Preference for Smartphones in Nepal

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**Abstract.** The objective of this research was to analyze the factors that influence the intention to buy smartphones again and the role of brand preference as a mediator in this relationship in the Nepalese market. The research studied the direct as well as the indirect effects of brand image and product quality, which were treated as independent variables, on the intention to buy again through brand preference. A deductive research approach was followed, and a quantitative method was applied, which involved a structured survey questionnaire based on a five-point Likert-type scale to gather the primary data. The sample included 393 smartphone users, who were picked through a convenience sampling method. Path analysis with structural equation modeling (SEM) led to the extraction of two major findings: (i) brand image and product quality have a direct and significant positive effect on the intention to buy again ( $\beta = 0.250$ , and  $p < 0.000$ ), ( $\beta = 0.284$ , and  $p < 0.000$ ), and (ii) brand preference partially mediates the relationship between the independent variables and repurchase intention ( $\beta = 0.534$ , CR = 16.623,  $p < 0.001$ ). The study contributes to the literature on consumer behavior by signifying that brand preference plays a mediating role in the smartphone market in Nepal. Marketers and business leaders will have access to practical insights for enhancing brand loyalty and developing informed repurchase strategies. In addition, the study's findings will serve as a guide to future researchers and business leaders for understanding the changing context of market development.

**Keywords:** Brand image, Consumer behavior, Purchase decision, Product Quality

## **1. Introduction**

Consumers are more inclined to make repeat purchases when they have a resilient preference for a specific brand, even when other factors may be more significant (Rai et al., 2023). Repeat purchase intention denotes an individual's propensity to make subsequent purchases from a certain corporate organization (Hellier et al., 2003). It is a customer's degree of perception and belief regarding repurchasing a specific product from a particular organization (Rajaobelina & Bergeron, 2009). Repeat purchase intention, as defined by Harris and Goode (2010), refers to the decision to utilize a particular brand's services again in the future. In the words of Goh et al. (2016), a customer's decision to repurchase products or goods from a similar brand is referred to as intended repurchase. By establishing relationships with current customers that would lead to more recurring business, organizations may spend less on promotional efforts than they would by gaining new ones (Dahal et al., 2023; Zeithaml et al., 1996). Therefore, repurchase intentions indicate service providers' ability to influence customers to maintain their association effectively, accept higher pricing, engage in negative word-of-mouth communication with other consumers, and express grievances to the business.

Ghimire et al. (2023) and Kaur and Quareshi (2015) said that customer retention and repurchase intentions could indicate future brand loyalty and repeat purchase behavior. Repurchase motivation primarily relies on prior purchasing experiences. Consumers exhibiting strong repeat purchase intentions are inclined to endorse a specific product to others and engage in impactful word-of-mouth marketing beyond the initial encounter. Prior purchasing experiences are the main factor in repurchase incentives (Kuo et al., 2009). The effect of brand preference on intended repurchase has yet to be studied (Dodds et al., 1991; Joshi et al., 2024), particularly in the context of smartphones.

There were contradictory findings from different researchers, with no consistent results regarding the factors that affect smartphone repurchasing intention. Izzudin and Novandari (2018) noticed that product quality has a substantial influence on intended repurchases. However, Adekunle and Ejechi (2018) revealed no significant correlation between product quality and the intended repurchases. Likewise, Fauzi and Ali (2021) found no significant impact of the quality of the product on repurchase intent. According to Gómez-Rico et al. (2022), brand image influences brand preference. Furthermore, Suhaily and Darmoyo (2017) found that there was no substantial impact of brand image and perception on repurchase decisions. Based on such findings, the study outlined the primary issues that need to be addressed regarding smartphone repurchasing intention in Nepal. Therefore, researchers and practitioners must identify the factors influencing repurchase intention, as there is a lack of consistent findings in the research on customer repurchase intent in the past, and even fewer studies have examined a structural model based on an established framework. The mediating function of brand preference on the association between image and quality within the repeat purchase intention model has not been investigated. Therefore, this study will establish a new model for measuring repurchasing intention towards smartphones. Therefore, further study is needed to examine the determinants that impact repurchase intention.

The study develops its brand preference theory through the service-dominant logic perspective suggested by Vargo and Lusch (2016) that defines brand preference as an active service ecosystem that connects customer information with brand information across retail networks. From a service ecosystem perspective, repurchase intention functions as a feedback loop that operates throughout the service lifecycle and affects demand forecasting and service innovation and loyalty-driven supply chain dynamics (Maglio & Spohrer, 2008). The research studies smartphone repurchases as a value co-creation process in technology retail ecosystems, where brand image and product quality act as operational resources that determine service interaction and customer retention.

Understanding customers' repurchase intentions is valuable as satisfied customers demonstrate a higher propensity to maintain loyalty toward a specific organization than dissatisfied customers (Dahal, 2021). Likewise, companies seek to acquire and sustain a competitive benefit over their rivals by

providing superior services to retain their clients. Customer retention and loyalty, which facilitate further transactions, give an Internet firm a competitive edge (Sharma et al., 2023; Tsai & Huang, 2007). The study can be analyzed in a more detailed manner if repurchasing intention is regarded in the framework of Nepal. Consequently, through the use of structural equation modeling (SEM), the research presents beneficial ideas about the consequences of product quality and brand image on the repurchase intention of Smartphone users in Nepal. Understanding the consumers' intention to repurchase smartphones is very important because these customers are usually seen as the early adopters of mobile technology and the opinion leaders who can facilitate technology reaching a critical mass of users. The research will provide valuable insights to business firms and future researchers. In addition, the mediation pathway through brand preference from a service science point of view provides practical assistance in creating customer-oriented service ecosystems for technology retail. This research not only highlights the marketing effect of repurchase intention but also considers it as a major indicator in the customer retention service logistics and brand management in Nepal's ever-changing smartphone sector.

## **2. Literature Review**

Service ecosystem studies emphasize how services operate through their information-based customer interaction systems (Dahal et al., 2025; Maglio et al., 2009). The framework establishes brand preference as a connecting point which transmits customer perceptions about product quality and brand identity to create their purchasing intentions that result in customer retention and shared value creation (Vargo & Lusch 2016). Brand preference exists as a current information system component which businesses can track and enhance through their customer relationship management and operational performance evaluation systems (Ostrom et al. 2015). Service-dominant logic leads to value creation as an outcome of actor interactions within service ecosystems, which exist beyond product-based value delivery systems.

Within the area of service science and informatics, repurchase intention is a crucial feedback loop in the customer lifecycle, which helps to inform supply chain loyalty, demand forecasting, and service innovation. This paper presents the relevant literature on the precedents of repurchase in a unified way, presenting brand preference as an informational node that transforms consumers' perceptions of quality and image into behavioral intent. Repurchase intention is the personal assessment of buying the same goods or services again, taking into account one's circumstances. Satisfied customers will buy the products again and again. Brand preference is the measure of how much customers like the goods and services provided by the company compared to those provided by other companies.

Bakır et al. (2024) observed that there was a correlation between the intentions to purchase the product multiple times and the quality of the service rendered. The findings of the study suggested that there was a direct connection between the quality of service and consumers' behavior, including intended repurchase activity, in the sector of airline industry. Fauzi and Ali (2021) pointed out the factors influencing the first and subsequent purchases. In particular, the researchers found that the quality and price of the product had a very strong, positive, and statistically significant effect on the decision of the consumers to buy the product. Nevertheless, the quality of the product was not a significant factor for consumers' repurchase intention, while price was a significant factor for repeat purchases. Adekunle and Ejechi (2018) targeted Nigerian smartphone users who intended to repurchase their phones. The results showed a positive and significant association between user satisfaction and the likelihood of repurchasing. However, it was found that user-friendliness and performance had a positive but statistically non-significant association with the purchasing intention. Ketut (2018) examined the role of brand image on consumers' preference to buy again, with product quality being the mediator of the effect. The study concluded that product quality has a positive and significant impact on repeat purchases. Likewise, Izzudin and Novandari (2018) examined the matter and found the impact of brand awareness and perceived quality on future repurchase intentions. Additionally, the research indicated that perceived quality plays a role in customer satisfaction and repurchase intention.

Filieri et al. (2017) revealed that consumers' intentions to repurchase the smartphones were affected by aesthetic and functional characteristics related to the product, like product design, perceived usefulness, and perceived brand quality. Suhaily and Soelasih (2017) studied the factors that determine the probability of performing another online transaction. The research revealed that e-service excellence significantly influences customer satisfaction and intended repurchases. Shin et al. (2013) observed that online transaction contexts and website quality can influence repeat purchase intention by diminishing or enhancing consumer trust, satisfaction, and commitment through mediating variables. Kim et al. (2012) studied the factors impacting the value of online shopping and a consumer's likelihood of repurchase. The two dissimilar income groups demonstrate differing effects of quality characteristics on the importance and repeat purchases.

Janudin and Warasto (2024) examined the effects of place of origin, lifestyle, and brand image on purchasing behavior, taking into account the influence of product quality. Researchers have revealed that product quality, lifestyle, and brand image meaningfully influence consumers' buying decisions regarding Samsung products. The study of Kalaiselvi and Nidhyananth (2018) focused on erosion as a factor affecting consumer brand selection for sedan automobiles. Due to the car's design, word-of-mouth marketing, product features, durability, technology, monetary value, services, and brand, Maruti is the preferred brand by most consumers in the research area.

Ul Zia and Sohail (2016) examined the variables influencing consumer brand choices in the automotive industry. The outcomes demonstrate a significant association between customer brand preference and brand participation, advocacy, involvement, quality, and pricing. Sultan et al. (2016) investigated the issues that influence brand preference among young people when purchasing laptops. The researchers have examined whether laptop quality significantly impacts brand preference in Karachi.

In Krishnagiri Town, Lakshmanan and Gayathri (2014) noticed the customer choice of car users. Among the abilities such as technology, safety, and aesthetics, comfort has been acknowledged as the most important factor for a compact car. Mohan Raj et al. (2013) did a survey on consumers' preferences for brands in MUVS and SUVs. The researchers revealed that product quality, durability, style, and design had a strong influence on brand preference. Wang (2013) conducted research that uncovered the relationship between packaging and brand preference as well as perceived quality of food items. The empirical evidence points out that visual packaging influences consumers' attitudes and their brand selection. The perceived quality of food items has a dual effect on brand preference, that is, both direct and indirect.

Tarigan and Bernarto (2024) examined how brand image and trust affected customer satisfaction and intention to repurchase in the case of Starbucks Coffee in Japan. They strongly believed that trust and brand image have a positive impact on people's repurchase decisions. Luo et al. (2024) looked at the mediating role of perceived value in relation to the connection between repurchase intention and brand image. It was revealed that brand image has a large effect on the perceived value and hence on the intention to purchase again. Resmawati (2022) studied the factors leading to repetitions of buying the Lifebuoy brand, namely trust, brand image, value, and price. The research found a strong link between the buyer's intended repeat purchase and the brand image of Lifebuoy Antibacterial Soap. In the study by Putri and Yasa (2022), the link between brand images and coffee shop customers' intended repurchase was analyzed. The study showed a strong and positive correlation between brand image, customer satisfaction, and repeat purchasing intention in Indonesia. Prasetya and Farida (2021) claimed that brand image is a significant factor in repeat purchase. Azmi et al. (2022) backed up the claim that brand image, sales promotions, and advertising positively influence the online buyer's intentions to make repeat purchases. As per the research findings, brand image, sales promotion, and advertising all contribute to the shoppers' inclination to make more purchases. Huang et al. (2019) found a powerful connection between the brand image and future purchase in the ecotourism market, reflecting that the image of the brand plays a huge role in the revival of customers.

Likewise, Ketut (2018) looked into the impact of brand image on customer intentions for pulling out more purchases, the role of product quality as a mediator, and finally stated that brand image has a positive influence on repurchase intention. Prabowo et al. (2019) also examined how word-of-mouth, brand reputation, and customer satisfaction affected the perception of hotel rooms' spaciousness. The conclusions drawn by the study were that repeat buying is directly and indirectly affected by brand reputation, customer satisfaction, and word-of-mouth. Wijayajaya and Astuti (2018) conducted a survey regarding the role of brand perception and trust in the case of customers' willingness to do online shopping again. Their findings showed that the quality of e-services has a positive influence on customer satisfaction, which, in turn, positively influences buyers' inclinations to make repeat purchases. Filieri and Lin (2017) researched the impact of cultural, aesthetic, branding, and utilitarian factors on young Chinese consumers' likelihood of repurchasing mobile phones. The outcome was that perceived quality, brand awareness, and design attractiveness were the most important factors determining young Chinese customers' willingness to repurchase smartphones.

The group led by Gómez-Rico et al. (2022) performed a study, and they found that contemporary brand image instruments affect customers' wine brand choosing and winery visiting intentions. The study results indicated that brand image and brand preference have a positive relationship with each other. Similarly, Jasmani and Sunarsi (2020) researched brand image, promotional mix, and product mix and their influence on the customer behavior of Sari Roti products. The researchers concluded that the product mix, brand image, and promotions are the three main factors that decide consumer purchases. In addition, Rai's (2020) adventure into the circumference of influences on the mobile phone consumers' decision making opened the door to considering the factors sorted as social, brand appraisal, and price that would eventually lead to a conclusion or a sale.

According to Elammari and Cavus (2019), the factors that most significantly impacted smartphone purchasing choices of consumers were product quality, brand image, and social aspects. These factors made price unimportant to consumers' decisions. Amron (2018) took a close look at the factors of product quality, price, trust, and brand perception, and their impact on the consumers' decisions regarding MPV cars. Meanwhile, Suhaily and Darmoyo (2017) brought to light the impact of brand image, product quality, and perceived price on consumer trust, which in turn acts as a mediator between them and purchasing decisions. The findings indicated that brand image was significantly linked to purchasing, but then, so it was concluded, had no influence on the relationship that existed between them.

The research showed that the four independent variables significantly and positively influenced consumers' decisions to own MPV vehicles. The majority of scholars agree that brand preference, loyalty, and the ability to command a premium price are linked to a more robust brand image (Godey et al., 2016). Foster (2016) determined how the mineral water product "Amidis" brand image influenced consumer choice. The study's results demonstrate that the brand image influences consumer purchase decisions. Ambolau et al. (2015) explored the effect of brand awareness and image on purchasing behavior, demonstrating that brand image and brand awareness significantly affect purchase decisions.

The brand's image strongly influences customers' decision-making (Braun et al., 2014). Pars and Gulsel (2011) revealed that the brand image affects consumer decisions. Researchers have determined that a brand's image positively affects consumers' destination choices. Chang and Liu (2009) led a study to examine the effect of brand equity on purchasing intentions within service industries. The study found that brand equity substantially influenced purchasing decisions.

Several factors might influence the repurchase intention. Price, brand, quality, country of origin, sales promotion, advertisement, personal communication, etc., can be used to measure the repurchase intention. More rational factors, such as product quality and brand image, have been used to measure the repurchase intention, and the mediating effect of brand preference in the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables has been used.

Figure 1 outlines the conceptual framework, which considers a review of earlier studies and the study's objectives, followed by the study hypotheses.

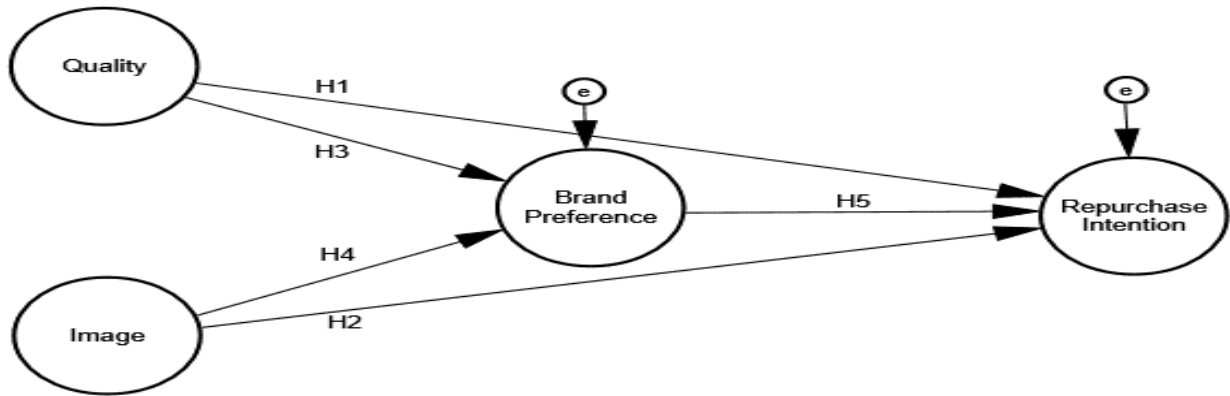


Fig. 1: Study Framework

The study framework follows service system theory by using brand preference as a service node, which converts input variables (brand image and product quality) into repurchase intention that serves as a vital measurement in service lifecycle analysis. The hypotheses are thus framed not only as consumer behavior relationships but as service system linkages that support predictive modeling in service operations.

### Study Hypotheses

- H1: *The quality of a smartphone positively and significantly affects the intention to repurchase.*
- H2: *A smartphone's brand image significantly impacts the intention of repurchasing.*
- H3: *The quality of a smartphone positively and significantly affects brand preference.*
- H4: *Smartphone's brand image significantly affects brand preference.*
- H5: *A smartphone's brand preference can mediate the relationship between quality and image, influencing consumers' intent to repurchase it.*

## 3. Materials and Procedures

The study elucidated the direct and indirect impacts of quality and image on Nepalese consumers' desire to repurchase smartphones, with the mediating function of brand preference in the association between quality, image, and repeat purchasing behavior. The pertinent data were gathered through a structured survey questionnaire. A quantitative research technique was employed for gathering data.

### Populace and Sampling

The population for the research was made up of all individuals in the Kathmandu Valley who possessed smartphones. The primary participants were those who used smartphones and were planning to buy a new one and go to retail stores in the Kathmandu Valley. The sampling technique applied in the research was convenience sampling.

### Data Collection Instrument

The study developed an organized questionnaire as a data collection instrument, comprising 24 questions. It was divided into five sections: 1. General Information (2 questions), 2. Quality (5 questions), 3. Image (5 questions), 4. Brand Preference (6 questions), and 5. Repurchase Intention (6 questions). Twenty-two variable-related questions in sections 2 to 5 were designed using closed-ended "five-point Likert scales", ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree".

**Data Gathering**

Based on a convenience sampling method, sales representatives from 100 smartphone retail outlets in the Kathmandu Valley were requested to facilitate completion of ten survey questionnaires by their customers from January to April 2025. 1,000 survey questionnaires were disseminated to respondents, and 393 respondents correctly completed the information and were included. Kline (2016) argued that for "social science research", 200 or more replies are sufficient for testing study hypotheses utilizing path analysis by "structural equation modeling". Thus, the sample size for the research is 393 responses.

**The Participants Demographics**

Table 1 presents information from 393 respondents who provided precise information for the study.

Table 1. The Respondents

	Nos	%		Nos	%
<i>Respondent's Age Group:</i>			<i>Respondent's Sex:</i>		
20 Yrs. and Below	28	7.1	Female	214	54.5
21 – 35 Yrs.	213	54.2	Male	179	45.5
36 – 50 Yrs.	116	29.5			
51 Yrs. and Above	36	9.2			
Total for each section	393	100.0	Total	393	100.0

**Data Screening**

As shown in Table 2, the internal consistency of the observed variables was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha for both observed and latent variables during data screening.

Table 2. Data Screening

Constructs	Internal Consistency Statistics				Common Method Bias [CMB] Statistics
	Before, if the item deleted		After, if the item deleted		
	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Observed Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Retained Variables	
Quality	0.737	5	0.829	3	37.317 %
Image	0.589	5	0.728	3	
Brand Preference	0.672	6	0.754	3	
Repurchase Intention	0.648	6	0.750	3	
		22		12	

All the latent variables' alpha values from retained variables are more than the suggested threshold value of 0.70, according to Hair et al. (2018). Furthermore, the analysis evaluated the "Harman single-factor test" using the 12 observed variables, as prescribed by Podsakoff et al. (2003), to assess the

"common method bias (CMB)" among the variables. As presented in the last column of Table 2, CMB statistics reveal that a variance of 37.317% was below the suggested cut-off point of 50%, by Cho and Lee (2012). Hence, 12 observed variables, grouped into three independent latent variables (i.e., Quality, Image, and Brand Preference) and one dependent variable (i.e., Repurchase Intention), had advanced to further analysis.

**Data Validity**

The convergent legitimacy of the independent latent variables was examined through "average variance extracted (AVE)" and "construct reliability (CR)." Furthermore, the study used "Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlations" to assess the discriminant legitimacy of the independent latent variables before evaluating the hypothesized paths' significance. The validity statistics are demonstrated in Table 3.

Table 3. Validity Statistics

Independent Latent Variables	Convergent Validity			Discriminant Validity		
	No. of the retained variables	Average Variance Extracted [AVE]	Construct Reliability [CR]	HTMT Ratios of correlations of the Independent Latent Variables		
				Quality	Image	Brand Preference
Quality	3	0.621	0.830			
Image	3	0.552	0.774	0.3146		
Brand Preference	3	0.514	0.758	0.4872	0.3993	

The outputs of the validity test indicate that all independent constructs have a good AVE (surpassing the threshold value of 0.50) and CR (exceeding the threshold value of 0.7), as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and Hair et al. (2018). The HTMT criterion assesses the average correlations between indicators and their reflective constructs. According to Henseler et al. (2015), the permissible levels of "discriminant validities" are less than 0.90. As depicted in Table 3, all of the HTMT ratios of the independent constructs were less than the recommended value of 0.90, establishing discriminant validity between the reflective constructs. Moreover, the absolute values of the observed variables' skewness and kurtosis (-0.237 to +0.086 and -0.940 to -0.242, respectively) were indicative of normality as they fell within the recommended range of ±2, according to the guidelines of George and Mallery (2010).

**4. Outcomes**

The SEM was implemented in the research to scrutinize the model's explanatory power through evaluation of the "multiple correlation coefficients" related to every latent variable that came from the imputed data. The depiction of the "standardized estimates" related to the basic model without influencing the mediating effect of brand preference on the intention to repurchase can be seen in Figure 2.

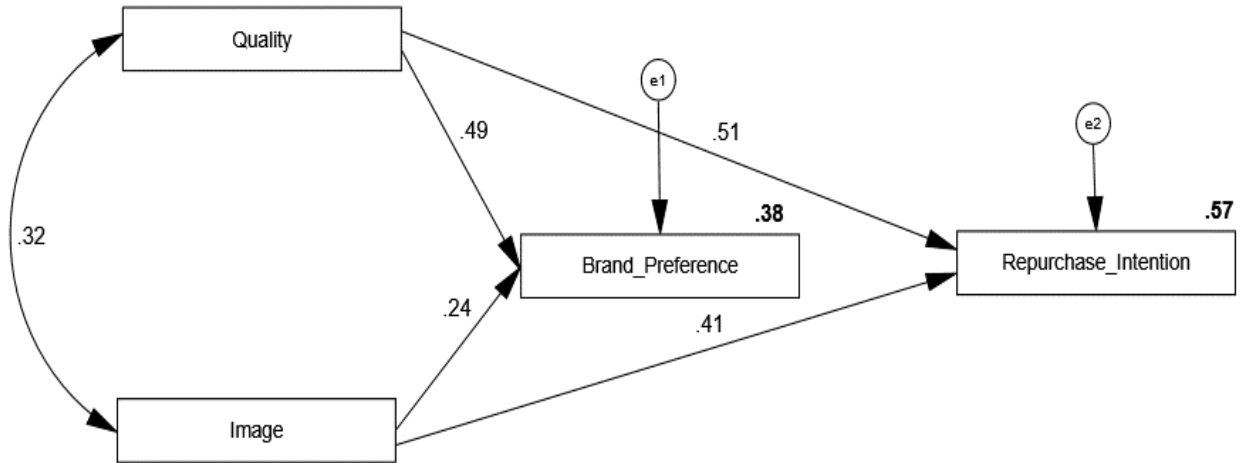


Fig. 2: The study model without mediating the role of brand preference on repurchase intention

The study's findings, as presented in Figure 2, indicate that the smartphone's quality and brand image have a significant influence on brand preference, accounting for approximately 38.0% of the variance. Moreover, the collective influence of quality and image (without the mediating effect of brand preference) accounts for approximately 57.0% of the variation in customers' repurchase intentions. Furthermore, Figure 3 displays the standardized estimates of the fundamental model, which includes the mediating effect of brand preference on repeat purchase intention.

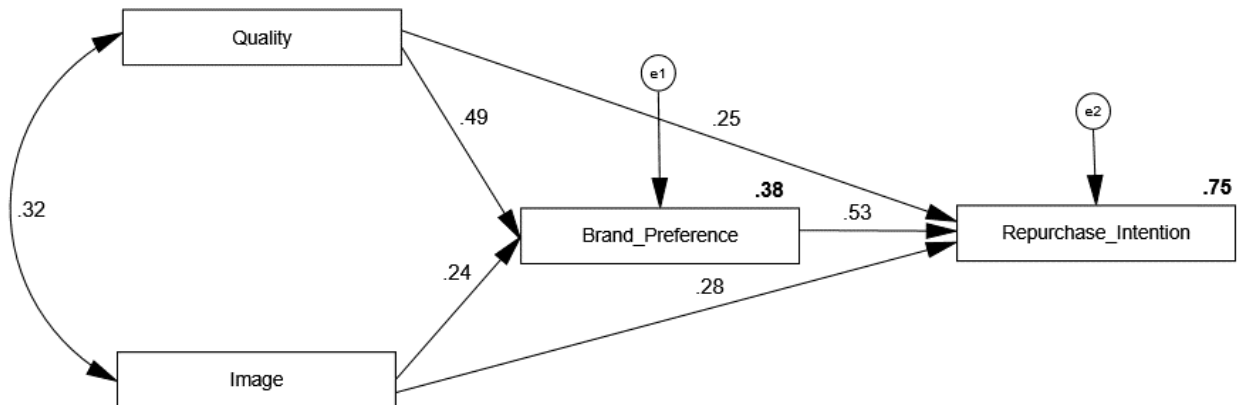


Fig. 3: The study model with the mediating role of brand preference on repurchase intention

Figure 3 displays that the collective impact of image, quality, and brand preference accounts for approximately 75.0% of the variation in customers' repurchase intention. It means smartphone brand preference accounts for approximately 18% of the variation in added value that influences customers' repurchase intentions. Table 4 depicts the direct and indirect influence of the regression path parameter estimates.

Table 4. Regression-Path Parameter Estimates

Regression-Path	Regression Estimates		Standard Error	Critical Ratio	p-value	Remarks
	Unstandardized	Standardized				
<b>Direct Influence</b>						
H1: Quality -----> Repurchase Intention	0.198	0.250	0.025	8.015	***	Accepted
H2: Image -----> Repurchase Intention	0.444	0.284	0.044	10.171	***	Accepted
H3: Quality -----> Brand Preference	0.352	0.493	0.030	11.681	***	Accepted
H4: Image -----> Brand Preference	0.335	0.238	0.059	5.646	***	Accepted
<b>Indirect Influence</b>						
H5: Quality & Image ---> Brand Preference ---> Repurchase Intention						
	0.593	0.534	0.036	16.623	***	Accepted

The path coefficients derived from the model elucidated the extent of the direct impact on the endogenous variables, such as quality, image, and brand preference, on repeat purchasing intention. Table 5 displays the indirect, direct, and total effects of the interrelationship among the latent variables.

Table 5. The Model's Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects

	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Remarks
H1: Quality -----> Repurchase Intention	0.250 (*) (p = 0.001)	0.263 (*) (p = 0.001)	0.513 (*) (p = 0.001)	Significant
H2: Image -----> Repurchase Intention	0.284 (*) (p = 0.001)	0.127 (*) (p = 0.001)	0.411 (*) (p = 0.001)	Significant
H3: Quality -----> Brand Preference	0.493 (*) (p = 0.001)	-	0.493 (*) (p = 0.655)	Significant
H4: Image -----> Brand Preference	0.238 (*) (p = 0.001)	-	0.238 (*) (0.001)	Significant
H5: Quality & Image ---> Brand Preference ---> Repurchase Intention	-	-	0.534 (*) (p = 0.001)	Significant

The fifth hypothesis put forth the idea that the preference for a smartphone brand might serve as a mediator between the quality and image aspects and the repurchase intention. The outcomes of the research ( $\beta = 0.534$ ,  $CR = 16.623$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) confirmed a significant positive correlation between the dependent and independent variables, thus providing evidence for H5.

## 5. Discussions

The brand reputation is generally more positive for brands that show a good reputation in terms of reliability, quality, and service. Building a brand with a strong reputation can create trust and reliance in consumers, which will thus lead to more purchases from that brand. Focusing on smartphones, consumers tend to repeat purchases from brands that have successfully cultivated a favorable reputation

regarding product quality, dependability, and inventive features (Rai et al., 2022). Studies have shown a positive association between the reputation of reliable brands and their market presence, as well as the likelihood of customers' repurchasing intentions. Product performance, features, brand image, and affordability affect consumers' repurchasing intentions. Consumer preference for a particular brand can significantly influence their propensity to repurchase smartphones, even in the presence of other influential factors.

Although many factors can affect consumers' decisions to repurchase a product, this study emphasizes the effect of quality and image on repeat purchasing intention, and the mediating variable is brand preference. The study's finding shows that product quality significantly impacted repurchase intention ( $\beta = 0.250$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ); hence, H1 is accepted, and the findings are similar to other findings (Adekunle & Ejechi, 2018; Izzudin & Novandari, 2018; Kettu, 2018; Rai et al., 2022) that product quality significantly influences intended repurchases and support the common truth that product quality influences repurchase intention. The study's second goal was to explore the effect of a brand's image on repeat purchases. The study's results showed that the brand image had a significant impact on intended repeat purchases ( $\beta = 0.284$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting H2. This conclusion aligns with the earlier findings of Azmi et al. (2022), Putri and Yasa (2022), and Resmawati (2022), which support the general notion that repeat purchase intention is influenced by brand image. The following study intended to evaluate the effect of smartphone quality on brand preference. The research findings reveal that repeat purchasing intention was influenced by product quality ( $\beta = 0.493$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), and H3 was accepted. The study's findings were similar to those of Kalaiselvi and Nidhyananth (2018) and supported the general truth that product qualities influence brand preference.

The study's final goal was to evaluate the consequences of brand image on brand preference toward smartphone buying. The outcome revealed that brand image affects brand preference ( $\beta = 0.238$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), thereby acknowledging and accepting H4. The result is similar to the previous various findings of Elammari and Cavus (2019), Gómez-Rico et al. (2022), Jasmani and Sunarsi (2020), and Karki et al. (2024). This finding is a universal truth: the product's image influences brand preference. The study noticed that brand preference has a positive and significantly mediating influence on the relationship between the independent variables (brand image and product quality) and repurchase intention ( $\beta = 0.434$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ), supporting H5. Therefore, the influence of the brand's image and the product's quality can be improved through the brand preference on the repurchase intention.

The research results highlight the role of service informatics, the information on brand perception and quality assessments, in forecasting and controlling repurchase logistics. The mediating model for the management team will be a diagnostic tool that will show whether the retention strategies need to be directed to the enhancement of objective product attributes (quality) or to the management of subjective brand narratives (image), where brand preference will be the vital metric for integration. From a service ecosystem perspective, brand preference functions as an information channel which connects smartphone retailing users to multiple value-creating interactions that occur through platform-based systems (Vargo & Lusch 2016). The study creates a model which service informatics platforms can use to track live changes in brand perception and forecast customer repurchase rates and improve service delivery systems that represent fundamental elements of the service-dominant strategy used in competitive retail environments. Furthermore, the findings demonstrate that service lifecycle analytics can use brand preference information to improve customer relationship management systems, enhance demand forecasting capabilities and build strong service networks in developing countries such as Nepal.

## 6. Conclusion and Implications

The study examines smartphone repurchase as a service system outcome, which depends on information flow and value co-creation and ecosystem interactions according to service science and service-dominant logic. Brand preference exists as a psychological mediator and a service informatics metric which connects customer perception to operational decision-making in technology retail. The research

advances theoretical knowledge and practical application by providing a scalable digital marketplace service innovation framework which combines consumer behavior models with service lifecycle management and CRM informatics.

The study examined the effect of product quality and brand image on the intention to repurchase smartphones. The analysis also examined whether brand preference mediates the relationship between brand image, smartphone quality, and the desire to repurchase. Thus, it can be concluded that smartphone quality is a crucial factor in consumers' repeat purchases in the Nepalese market. The quality of smartphones can enhance the intention for recurrent purchases. Nepalese consumers put quality above all else when it comes to smartphones. The study pointed out that how people perceive the phones can lead to making re-purchases in Nepal. Therefore, it can be concluded that brand image is a major factor in selecting brands for repeat sales. A powerful brand image corresponds to a higher chance of getting a smartphone again. Other than the quality, price, and features, Nepalese customers choose the brand as the main deciding factor for their smart device. Moreover, the study looked into and found the mediating role of brand preference in the relationships between smartphone quality, brand image, and the intention to repurchase. The outcomes showed that brand preference acted as a significant positive mediator in both the relationships of brand image with smartphone quality and repurchase intention, through the lens of smartphone purchasing in Nepal.

The application of structural equation modeling to the mapping of the psychological 'logistics' of customer decision-making is shown by this study for the discipline of service science. The validated model, in turn, enhances the area of service informatics by illuminating such constructs (brand image, quality, preference) that are measurable and can be monitored over time for the purpose of predicting repurchase behavior and thus optimizing inventory, marketing resource allocation, and customer relationship management services in competitive retail markets. Gaining a thorough understanding of the different factors that impact smartphone repeat purchase in Nepal, together with the mediating effect of brand preference, can, thus, provide smartphone manufacturers and marketers in this market with great insights. Companies prioritizing performance, features, brand image, and price, and at the same time, building brand preference, can smartly and efficiently cater to the needs and wants of the consumers, thus encouraging the consumers to return for repeat purchases. It is essential for companies to consistently produce high-quality products, to conduct efficient and effective marketing, and to engage with customers in order to win their preference for the brand and, eventually, encourage them to repeat the purchase. It is important to realize that the findings may vary because of the differences in culture, economy, and regions. Thus, performing research on Nepal can offer special insights regarding the factors that affect the smartphone purchasing intention in the specified situation.

The research has made a great impact on theorization and has laid down some solid implications along the way. In understanding the process of consumers' mental activities in the case of making repurchase intentions of smartphones, the results of the research provide a solid base for academic knowledge. Among other purposes, the research was intended to see how the market reacts to the research findings. The results of the investigation give a clearer picture of the cycle of consumer repurchase of smartphones. The findings of the study are so wide-ranging that they can strongly influence the day-to-day activities of marketing practitioners. Specifically, marketing organisations of smartphone businesses focus on the elements that influence consumer behavior when advertising and offering goods and services. The study's conclusions about Nepalese smartphone buying behaviour will provide valuable insights and contribute to consumer behaviour theory. It was observed that the brand quality and image of smartphones have a substantial impact on repeat purchase intention when purchasing smartphones. The marketing manager and the company must consider smartphone product quality and brand image factors. The findings may be helpful to the company and marketers when designing marketing strategies for smartphone products.

The study utilized only brand image and product quality as independent variables. Other factors affecting repurchase intention in smartphone purchases were not considered. All responses were

gathered exclusively from the Kathmandu Valley; only the smartphone product was used in the study. Therefore, the study's results may not apply to the overall use of another product. However, there are several future research directions and avenues. Similar studies have the potential to be undertaken in diverse advanced and emerging countries, encompassing individuals from a range of socio-economic backgrounds and exhibiting diverse perspectives, attitudes, traits, customs, habits, cultures, purchasing power, and so forth. Furthermore, by altering the specification of the independent variables, future studies have the potential to be applied across a range of service industries. Apart from smartphones, this idea can be applied to several other products, including cars, laptops, and motorcycles. Besides, the application of demographic factors in this model may be considered as moderating factors while estimating repurchase intention. The study recommends the inclusion of independent factors, like word-of-mouth, personal characteristics, marketing, and technology, which were not part of the research, to evaluate consumers' intention to repurchase smartphones. The discovery could be a trailblazing, practical proof and a basis for research in different contexts to come.

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